

Preface

Clinical Nutrition



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Editors

Good nutrition plays an important role in preventive health care, as well as in the management of various medical conditions. But delivering good nutrition means different things to different people. Veterinarians remain the number one source of information about nutrition for the majority of pet owners, although other sources, such as the internet, are gaining in popularity and influence. As such, it is imperative that veterinarians develop a good working knowledge about nutrition and apply this knowledge to their daily practice. The World Small Animal Veterinary Association and the American Animal Hospital Association have partnered with various groups and industry partners to not only encourage veterinarians to incorporate nutritional assessments into every patient evaluation but also provide tools to make it easier to do so. This issue of *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* does not repeat what is available elsewhere, but provides valuable resources, tools, and information to supplement what is otherwise available.

The topics covered in this issue reflect the fact that the majority of pet dogs and cats seen by veterinarians are healthy or generally healthy, yet may have different nutritional needs. Some pet owners prefer to feed commercial pet foods, while others prefer other options. Separate articles here provide insights that will help veterinarians feel more confident when evaluating home-prepared foods or evaluating commercial pet foods.

In recent years, there has been considerable debate over the unique dietary needs of cats. Particularly of interest is the relative value of proteins and carbohydrates in feline diets. Likewise, working and service dogs, and aging dogs and cats, all can have special dietary needs. Separate articles herein address each of these issues.

This issue concludes with articles addressing common diet-sensitive problems: endocrine diseases in cats, and obesity in cats and dogs. Obesity is considered the most common form of malnutrition in developed countries, and controlling obesity can be challenging. This article provides information that goes beyond simple dietary issues and addresses some of the communications and environmental needs required to effectively manage pet obesity.

We thank the contributing authors for providing their time, expertise, and valuable viewpoints. We believe that every small animal veterinarian will find this issue of *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* to be very useful. We encourage you to use these resources to build your confidence and increase your practice of performing nutritional assessments and providing sound nutritional advice for your patients.

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